

## Policy Review Committee

Venue: Committee Room 2

Date: 23 June 2011

Present: Councillor M Jordan (Chair), Councillor Mrs M Davis, Councillor Mrs E Metcalfe, Councillor R Musgrave, Councillor R Packham, Councillor I Reynolds, Councillor Mrs A Spetch and Councillor R Sweeting

Apologies for Absence: Councillor I Nutt

Also Present: Councillor Mrs D Davies

Officers Present: Karen Iveson, Executive Director; Glenn Shelley and Richard Besley, Democratic Services

### **1. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **2. Chair's Address to the Policy Review Committee**

The Chair welcomed councillors of the new Policy Review Committee to their first meeting. He highlighted their roles and responsibilities in what are challenging times.

In considering the remit of the Committee, the Chair looked forward to addressing the Work Programme being put before the Committee later in the agenda.

Councillor Packham was concerned that councillors were finding it difficult to seek guidance from Officers and Executive Members without a detailed breakdown of roles and duties of Officers and the Executive. This view was supported by the Chair.

The Executive Director explained that there had been major changes to personnel, job roles and functions. With the new staffing structure coming into place on 1 July, it was felt that most areas of responsibility for Officers and had now been resolved. The Executive Director thanked councillors for their patience and reminded them that Access Selby would be operating as though an arms length organisation although they have a direct contact number through which to raise issues and that details of the new Community Support Officers would be available soon.

Generally the Committee felt that that the new contact number at Access Selby was working well and responses to councillor enquiries were handled promptly.

### **3. Timing of Meetings**

The Chair notified the Committee of the need to agree a suitable start time for the 2011/12 Municipal Year.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That future Policy Review Committee meetings commence at 5:00pm.**

#### **REASONS FOR DECISIONS:**

To accommodate councillors with work commitments.

### **4. Policy Review Committee Report PR/11/1 – Work Programme**

Democratic Services Manager, Glenn Shelley, presented the report. He outlined the constitutional requirements for the Work Programme and the need to present the Work Programme to both the Executive for consultation and Council for approval.

The Chair welcomed what he felt was a detailed and thorough Work Programme. The Chair stressed that the Work Programme was owned by the committee and encouraged their input.

Councillor Packham raised a number of issues with the Work Programme and made some suggestions as to possible additions that he felt warranted consideration by the Committee. Councillor Packham raised the issue of Car Park Fees, Countryside Management and the Street Scene Contract. The Chair felt that some of the items suggested may cause an overlap with the work of Scrutiny Committee and he undertook to meet with the Chair of Scrutiny to ensure activities were effectively planned.

Councillors considered that many items on the Work Programme were far reaching and may require some technical expertise. The Committee heard that, where appropriate, officers would be available to provide assistance.

Councillors then discussed a number of possible additions to the Work Programme, these included Licensing and Planning Enforcement as well as Housing Allocation by the Council and Housing Associations.

The Committee highlighted that the volume of topics on the Work Programme would mean limited opportunity for the scrutiny of policy areas put forward by councillors. Councillors were informed that, under the revised Constitution, the Executive must provide the opportunity for Policy Review Committee to comment on policy which forms part of the Budget and Policy Framework of the Council. The Work Programme had been developed with reference to the Executive Forward Plan. All known policies which fit within this criteria had been identified to afford the committee the opportunity to comment. It would be for the Committee to decide how much resource it wishes to devote to each policy within the Budget and Policy Framework.

Some councillors felt that Policy Review Committee needed to be sure that any Work Programme items regarding the Budget and Policy were compulsory to avoid the Committee being overly burden and unable to select its own areas of interest.

The Chair would meet with the Chair of Scrutiny and Officers to produce a revised Work Programme for the next meeting.

The Chair asked the Committee to consider Site Allocations DPD, an item scheduled for the 26 July meeting. The Committee heard that there had been changes to the timetable with regard to the document, which would require a quick response from Policy Review Committee.

The Chair proposed setting up a working group of three councillors to discuss the report outside of the Committee to accommodate the schedule and submit a recommendation to the Executive.

Councillors felt that, as the report will include a number of important areas of policy, all members of the Committee should be present. An additional meeting of Policy Review Committee was provisionally arranged for Tuesday 9 August 2011.

**RESOLVED:**

**To receive and note the report.**

**REASONS FOR DECISIONS:**

The Committee ensures the contribution of Policy Review is effective in supporting service improvement and delivery against district wide and Council priorities.

The meeting closed at 5:13pm